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WHOLE No. 779

SENECA'S APPEARANCE

The known facts about the appearance of the philosopher Seneca are not many¹.

In *Epistulae* 45.3 Seneca, in an answer to Lucilius, who has asked for some books, writes facetiously as follows:

'... Your desire, however, that I send you my writings does not make me think myself scholarly, any more than a request for a picture of myself would seem to me a compliment to my looks. I know that your request is due more to your charity than to your judgment. Even if the request is due to your judgment, it was charity that imposed the judgment upon you....'

Here Seneca is speaking of his writings, not of his appearance. At various times in his life poor health ministered against his appearance². The great drawback, it seems, was lack of weight, a situation which, at a later time, may have been aggravated by spare living.

Because so little is known about the details of his personal appearance, one should, therefore, be sceptical of the assertion that Seneca regularly wore a beard. The evidence usually advanced as proof that he wore a beard needs to be reexamined. In *Epistulae* 48.7 Seneca writes of the philosopher who quibbles over trifles: '... Do we knit our brows over this sort of problem? Do we let our beards grow for this reason?...' This is figurative language. It may only be a colloquial expression, although, of course, it may refer to the beard which some philosophers assumed, along with the mantle and the staff. Seneca's words in *Epistulae* 84.1 are without significance for our inquiry: '... You see why they <= journeys> benefit my health: since my passion for literature makes me lazy and careless about my body....' Philosophers who are neglectful of their bodies do not necessarily wear beards. The third passage, *Epistulae* 108.16, when it is taken in conjunction with the other two, certainly does not prove that Seneca wore a beard: '... it is easier for the will to cut off certain things entirely than to use them with restraint....' Seneca has been discussing (*Epistulae* 108.13-16) some

habits that remained with him as the result of the teachings of Attalus: some of the habits thus acquired he has retained in full, to others he has kept fast only in part. But there are numerous things that a man can cut off, literally and figuratively, besides a beard. Even if we do interpret the passage as showing that Seneca cut off his beard at the time he wrote this letter, i. e. late in his life, the testimony would prove that the busts of the philosopher should be *beardless*, since they all represent a man of at least sixty years of age.

I have discussed at such length a seemingly trivial detail because it is partly on the basis of the three passages discussed above, usually interpreted as proving that Seneca wore a beard, that a certain bust is identified as that of Seneca the philosopher. Since the sixteenth century many have accepted as a likeness of Seneca a bust which Fulvius Ursinus discovered in the Farnese Collection. His identification of this bust as a likeness of Seneca rested on his comparison of the bust with a contorniated medallion once in the possession of Cardinal Bernardino Maffei. On this was imprinted the countenance of a bearded man which resembles that of the bust. The medallion had, also, the inscription *Seneca*³. After that time many similar busts were noted in various collections. They all show a bearded, haggard, presumably grey-haired figure, with prominent features. However, not one of these busts, many in number, carries an inscription which would identify it as a likeness of Seneca. The best examples of the type are the bronze bust found at Herculaneum⁴ (it is now at Naples), and a marble bust, at Florence⁵. Because this type of bust seemed to correspond closely to the conception of the philosopher's appearance which one forms as he reads the accounts of his poor health, and because it was evidently like the type seen on the medallion, the identification seemed plausible. The bust is certainly that of a famous man⁶. This is shown by the fact that it was reproduced so often, and that many of the reproductions have survived. Then, too, the fact that as yet no medallion similar to that once owned by Cardinal Maffei has been found does not prove the spuriousness of the medallion which Ursinus saw. Nevertheless, the loss of the medallion (the only positive means of identifying the bust viewed by Ursinus) has thrown doubt on the identification. I have shown that the authentic bust need not be that of a bearded man. Furthermore, the fact that the busts of the haggard

¹Information about the appearance of Seneca may be found in the following places: Johann Jakob Bernoulli, *Römische Ikonographie*, 1:276-288 (Berlin, W. Spemann, 1882-1894. Two volumes, in four); P. Paider, *Possedons Nous le Portrait de Sénèque?*, *Le Musée Belge*, Bulletin Bibliographique 30 (1926), 153-158; E. Hübner, *Das Bildnis des Seneca*, *Archäologische Zeitung* 38 (1880), 20-22; Jean Lefebure, *In Imagines Virorum Illustrum ex Bibliotheca Fulvii Ursini... a Theodoro Gallaeo Expressas Commentarius* (Antwerp, J. Moretus, 1606); J. Sieveking, *Eine Darstellung des Seneca?*, *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, Beiblatt zum Jahrbuch des Archäologischen Instituts, 1921, 351-353 (this accompanies Volume 36 of the Jahrbuch [1921]); E. Quirino Visconti, *Iconographie Romaine*, especially 410-425 (Milan, J. P. Giegler, 1810).

²Seneca, *Epistulae* 78.1 *Deinde succubui et eo perductus sum ut ipse distillarem ad summam maciem....*; Tacitus, *Annales* 15.63 *Seneca, quoniam senile corpus et parco victu tenuatum lenta effugia sanguini praebebat, crurum quoque et poplitum venas arumpit....* Compare Dio Cassius 69.19.8.

³Compare J. Lefebure, 114 (see note 1, above).

⁴Compare E. Quirino Visconti, 410-425 (see note 1, above).

⁵Compare Hans Dutschke, *Antike Bildwerke in Oberitalien*, Volume 3, No. 500 (Leipzig, W. Engelmann. This work, in five volumes, was published in 1874-1882).

⁶Compare Visconti, 422 (see notes 1, 4, above).

and emaciated type possess in common such features as the unkempt hair, the fact that they are so numerous, and the fact that one of them, the Palatine⁷, is ivy-crowned, a circumstance which suggests that it represents a Greek poet, or at least some one of a time earlier than Seneca's day, all argue strongly that we should not accept these busts as likenesses of the philosopher Seneca⁸.

In 1813, near the Church of Saint Mary, in Rome, there was found a double bust which bore the names Socrates and Seneca. It is now in the Berlin Museum⁹. The figure on the bust that is named Seneca shows heavy, unequal eyebrows, which almost meet, a full (almost fat), smooth face, a small mouth with thick lips, a loosely hanging double chin, and a short thick neck. The well-formed head, to a great extent bald, the close-cut hair, brushed to lie close to the head, the wrinkled forehead, the lifelike, remarkable eyes give one the impression that he is looking at an actual portrait. The bust does not, however, leave an impression of a man weighed down by deep, introspective speculations. It is rather a likeness of a man occupied with less weighty matters. In the period of life to which the bust points (the bust represents a man at least sixty years of age), Seneca was interested in investigations whose character is indicated by his extant work entitled *Naturales Quaestiones*¹⁰. The inscriptions on the bust are, according to Hübner, undoubtedly genuine, are of the same date as the bust itself, and belong either to Seneca's lifetime or to a period but slightly later¹¹. According to Hübner, again, although the double bust is not the work of an artist of the first rank, it is a worthy production, evidently made after a living model. Bernoulli and Baumeister, among others, think this a representation of Seneca, and prefer it to the type found at Herculaneum¹². It is, apparently, not one of a general type, and it is not merely a fanciful, ideal portrait by some one in later times, some one who thought of Seneca only as a philosopher and as the peer of Socrates, and, in consequence, worthy of being modelled with him in a double bust.

However, the physical appearance of the man represented in the double bust seems to be the direct opposite of the picture of Seneca which is presented in his *Epistulae* and elsewhere. On this view there would seem to be an error in the inscription on the bust¹³. The simplest explanation of the contrast which some see between the bust and the testimony of ancient literature is that the artist ignored the fact that the philosopher became reduced in weight by spare living just

before his suicide¹⁴. The artist, we may urge, took as his model the Seneca whom the world had known previously. I myself see no real contradiction between the evidence in ancient literature about the philosopher's appearance and the impression given by the double bust. The bust is undoubtedly that of an old man, but not necessarily that of a healthy person (some think that the full, fat face indicates good health). Seneca all his life combated the effects of disease; as he grew older, he surely was compelled to withstand the attacks of asthma¹⁵. Certainly the double bust shows a man who was not only old but had endured some such form of ill-health¹⁶. But there is no testimony in the literature of Seneca's old age which proves that during this period of his life he was haggard and emaciated. In *Epistula* 78¹⁷ Seneca says he became very thin, but he is referring to an earlier period of his life, probably to the year 39, when, as Dio Cassius says, Seneca, in his capacity as *quaestor*, displayed his eloquence all too well before the Senate and would have lost his life at that time if a courtesan had not advised Caligula that the young orator would soon die anyhow because of grievous ill-health¹⁸. The statement by Tacitus¹⁹, then, is the main obstacle to our accepting the double bust as affording a likeness of Seneca. But even the historian's testimony does not prove that Seneca was an emaciated and haggard old man. Tacitus's statement is that Seneca's blood, at the time of his suicide, flowed slowly because his body, reduced by spare living, would scarcely allow the blood to escape. At that time Seneca's blood might have been thin as a result of meager diet during his last perilous days. We may note further that both Dio Cassius and Tacitus assert²⁰ that, when Seneca wished to retire from court, he *feigned* illness.

For three reasons the double bust should be preferred as a representation of Seneca to the type found at Herculaneum, and generally accepted, after Ursinus's time, as a representation of Seneca the philosopher. (1) The Socrates-Seneca bust is, according to expert opinion, almost contemporary with the philosopher; it was, we may therefore conclude, modelled on a living man (it does not represent an ideal, imaginary type). (2) There is not in Seneca's own writings or in those of any other ancient author information contradictory to the physical appearance portrayed in the bust. (3) The double bust bears an inscription, Seneca, which has not been proved spurious, whereas the bronze bust type carries no mark of identification. Furthermore, that type cannot now be compared with the medallion once owned by Cardinal Maffei. That medallion, on which the identification of the bronze bust as portraying Seneca rests, is not now in existence.

⁷Compare Edoardo Brizio, *Annali dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* 45 (1873), 98.

⁸Many suggestions have been made concerning the identity of the person represented by the bust. Brizio, 98 (see note 7, above) thinks that it is a bust of Philetas of Cos. Compare Karl Robert, *Archäologische Zeitung* 38 (1880), 35.

⁹This was first published by Lorenzo Re, *Seneca e Socrate* (Rome, 1816), and by E. Quirino Visconti, *Iconographie Romaine* (see note 1, above), and in *Mémoires dell' Accademia di Archeologia Romana* 157. Compare *Kurze Beschreibung der Antiken Skulpturen im Alten Museum*, No. 391 (Berlin, 1920).

¹⁰Compare J. Bernoulli, 1.278 (see note 1, above).

¹¹Compare E. Hübner (see note 1, above). The picture given there of the bust is the best available.

¹²Compare Bernoulli, 1.276 (see note 1, above); August Baumeister, *Denkmäler des Klassischen Altertums*, 3.1636 (Leipzig, Oldenburg, 1885).

¹³Compare O. Rossbach, L. A. Seneca, Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 1.2242.

¹⁴Compare Bernoulli, 1.279 (see note 1, above).

¹⁵Compare *Epistulae* 54.1. For his ill health see Seneca himself, *Consolatio Ad Helviam* 19.2, *De Vita Beata* 17.4, *Epistulae* 65.1, 78.1-4, 96.2, 104.1; Tacitus, *Annales* 15.45; Dio Cassius 62.25. Modern works that deal with Seneca's health include Fritz Husner, *Leib und Seele in der Sprache Senecas*, especially 32-34 (Basel, inaugural Dissertation, 1924; published also as *Philologus*, Supplementband XVII [Leipzig, Dieterich, 1924]); H. F. K. Marx, *Ueber die Anfänge mit dem Gefühle des Verschwindens... das Leiden des Philosophen Seneca*, *Abhandlungen der Geschichte der Wissenschaft zu Göttingen* 17 (1872), 3-44.

¹⁶Compare J. Sieveking, 351-353 (see note 1, above).

¹⁷See note 2, above.

¹⁸Compare Dio Cassius 60.19.8.

¹⁹Compare Tacitus, *Annales* 15.63 (quoted in note 2, above).

²⁰Compare Tacitus, *Annales* 15.45; Dio Cassius 62.25.

Sieveking²¹ has given an account of a small fragment of a relief which strengthens, somewhat, faith that the bust at Berlin represents Seneca the philosopher. The figure, now in the possession of Herr Paul Drey, of Berlin, is that of a seated, elderly man, with his right arm supported by the conventional philosopher's staff, and with the left arm, which lies across the lap, holding a stick. The right cheek rests against the right hand. The picture is a likeness of an old man; this is indicated by the flaccid features and wrinkled neck. The expressive face is beardless. The head is to a great extent bald; the nose is inclined to be hooked. The staff and the mantle characterize the philosopher. To Sieveking the figure appears to be of a Roman type; he thinks that it bears a very close resemblance to the figure (Seneca?) on the Berlin bust. In the fragment of the relief the element of senility is brought out very forcefully. Sieveking, however, disagreeing with Hubner, declares that the double bust belongs not to the first century, but to the third. He also thinks that the fragment of the relief is earlier than the double bust, but he is uncertain whether it belongs to the first century or to the second.

HENDRIX COLLEGE,
CONWAY, ARKANSAS

H. W. KAMP

REVIEW¹

Cato the Censor on Farming. Translated by Ernest Brehaut. <Number XVII>, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, Edited under the Auspices of the Department of History, Columbia University. New York: Columbia University Press (1933). Pp. xlv, (iii), 156. Illustrated^{1a}.

In 1913, "A Virginia Farmer", Mr. Fairfax Harrison, published the first American translation of Cato (selections), in a volume called *Roman Farm Management*², the annotations of which are intended to illuminate farm practice among the Romans. In 1933, Professor Ernest Brehaut, of Columbia University, gave us a translation of the whole of Cato, *De Agri Cultura*, with notes more copious and of a wider range. A year later there appeared in one volume in The Loeb Classical Library renderings of both Cato, *De Agri Cultura*, and Varro, *Res Rusticae*, with the Latin and the English on facing pages³. A translation of Columella for The Loeb Classical Library is now being prepared by Professor Harrison Boyd Ash, who has already translated

^{1a}See pages 351-353 of the work by Sieveking named in note 1, above.

¹For a review of this book, by Professor Harrison B. Ash, see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 29.37-39. Twice before in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY two reviews of a given book have been published. In each instance, after I had invited a certain scholar to review the book, another proffered me a review of the work. The readers of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY were, in each instance, the gainers. C. K. >.

²In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 28.1, note 2 I listed several recent works on agriculture. A forthcoming paper of my own, Phenology and Lore of Good and Bad Crops in Greek and Latin, is likewise concerned with farm life. It will appear in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY.

³The Treatise of Cato and Varro Done into English, With Notes of Modern Instances, By a Virginia Farmer < = Fairfax Harrison > (New York, Macmillan, 1913).

⁴Marcus Porcius Cato on Agriculture, <and> Marcus Terentius Varro on Agriculture, With an English Translation by William Davis Hooper, Revised by Harrison Boyd Ash (The Loeb Classical Library, 1934).

and annotated the tenth book⁴. The agricultural writers provide a fertile field for further studies.

On boarding an Italian steamer in 1914 I was greatly surprised to find the steerage passengers taking home to Italy American-made shovels and scythes. Later I had ample opportunity to find out the reason, for on many trips to the Roman Campagna I noted agricultural devices that had not been improved upon since Roman days. I saw many plows without iron, but only one metal plow (this was of American origin). I saw a large field being spaded by a score of workmen. I saw one modern mowing machine and one threshing machine. This would, of course, be an entirely unfair picture for the present, and doubtless is not an accurate picture for conditions in general in 1914-1916.

In the last century no one realized the backwardness of Italian agriculture better than did Cavour⁵.

Taught by his travels the latest applications of science to the arts, to industry, and to agriculture, Cavour set about adopting them. Agriculture throughout Italy was still so backward that, could Columella have returned to life, he would have found in some parts of the Peninsula tools of the same pattern he had known eighteen centuries before. Even in Lombardy, the most fertile garden in Europe, adherence to methods, obsolete elsewhere, prevented the soil from yielding its full bounty; and Piedmont lagged far behind Lombardy. Clumsy implements fitly typified the ignorance of the peasants, who clung to tradition and folk-lore in all their transactions with Mother Earth. Cavour's men at Grinzane assured him that, whilst four oxen had not been able to plow a certain piece of land during the new moon, a single yoke had plowed it easily during the last quarter! The great landlords had usually less practical knowledge than the factors to whom they entrusted their estates; and they were too unenterprising to risk their capital on novelties; better the old ways, with smaller returns, than the new, with uncertainty and perhaps loss.

In view of the tenacity of old ways and customs in Italy I believe that one might still learn a number of things about Roman agriculture by living among the peasants. At all events familiarity with their ways would enable one to approach the subject with greater sympathy.

Fields of reeds are grown to-day as supports for the grapevines, as they were in Cato's time (6.3-4; 47). When one sees brushwood and bundles of faggots being hauled into Rome, one recalls that Cato noted (7.1)⁶ as an advantage of a farm near the city the opportunity it offered as a market for wood and small cuttings. One who has seen the vineyards and the olive orchards understands much better the anxiety felt about storms (1.2; 3.2; 141.2)⁷.

The loving sympathy of the German historian Gregorovius for life on the Roman Campagna was acquired and deepened by his stay on it. He says, for example⁸:

⁴Harrison Boyd Ash, *L. Iunii Moderati Columellae Rei Rusticae Liber Decimus: De Cultu Hortorum*—Text, Critical Apparatus, Translation, and Commentary (a University of Pennsylvania thesis, Philadelphia, 1930).

⁵W. R. Thayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, 1.56-57 (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1911).

⁶Compare 2.4.

⁷I have tried to show elsewhere (THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 28.1-7, 9-12) what serious destruction was wrought by hail in antiquity.

⁸Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Latin Summers and an Excursion in Umbria*, Translated by Dorothea Roberts, 80 (London, Junior Army and Navy Stores, 1903).

... I read that poem <the Georgics> over and over again, beneath the vines at Genazzano, and convinced myself that all Virgil's remarks, his rules, his instructions are throughout just as sufficient now as if they had been written for the cultivators of the Campagna of to-day.

It is a far easier task to show sympathy with Cato's subject matter than to reproduce his style, which is that of a serious man earnestly intent upon teaching other men how to extract a living from a farm⁹. Cato was as frugal of words as of more material things. Professor Brehaut's translation is matter-of-fact, like the original. He has wisely refrained from adding literary graces not present in the Latin.

Scholars have been much puzzled by the following sentence (3.1): *Ita aedifices ne villa fundum quaerat <neve fundus villam>*. The translations by Messrs. Brehaut, Ash, and Harrison are as follows:

Build in such a way that the farm buildings will not find fault with the farm nor the farm with the buildings.

In building, you should see that the steading does not lag behind the farm nor the farm behind the steading.

When you do build, let your buildings be proportioned to your estate, and your estate to your buildings.

Obviously the last translation faithfully reproduces the meaning of the original, but, like the others, it fails to catch the jest in Cato's words. His humor caused no difficulty for the writer of the following paragraph, which was composed nearly one hundred years ago¹⁰:

According to the fashion prevailing in antiquity, farmhouses were built high, large, and roomy, though Cato shrewdly advises, that their magnitude should bear some relation to that of the domain, lest the villa should have to ask for the farm, or the farm for the villa.

In Chapter 1 Cato urges the prospective purchaser as he examines the farm to be observant enough to be able to find his way off it. This is not a particularly good brand of humor, but it is in keeping with the jest under discussion (Chapter 3), which strikes me as clever. The villa should be neither so large and luxurious that it would have to ask *Ubi est fundus?*, nor so relatively small that the farm might ask *Ubi est villa?* The idea which Cato succinctly expressed is expanded by Columella, *De Agricultura* 1.4.6-7:

Sed cum refert qualis fundus et quo modo colatur, tum villa qualiter aedificetur et quam utiliter disponatur. Multos enim deerasse memoria prodidit, sicut praestantissimos viros L. Lucullum et Q. Scaevolam, quorum alter maiores, alter minus amplas quam postulavit modus agri villas extruxit, cum utrumque sit contra rem familiarem. Diffusiora enim concepta non solum pluris aedificamus, sed etiam impensis maioribus tuemur; at minora cum sunt quam postulat fundus, dilabuntur fructus¹¹.

A troublesome expression occurs in Chapter 138. Cato says that there are no festivals for mules, horses, or asses *nisi si in familia sunt*. Professor Brehaut translates this by "unless they belong to the *familia*". W. Warde Fowler was not sure what these words mean,

but he objected to the following translation of the complete sentence: "For mules, horses and asses there are no other holidays than those of the family". He adds¹²:

... The words would more naturally mean that the animals had no holidays unless they belonged to the *familia* in some special sense, e. g. lived in the homestead. Cato is probably using *familia* in its true sense, of the economic unit settled on the land. Of this unit the animals in question were certainly members; but what animals were those which were not in the *familia*? Perhaps an explanation may be found in the distinction drawn by Varro (*R. R.* ii.6.4) between the *villatica pastio* and the *pastio agrestis*; the latter being far away while the former was at or near the homestead.

In 33.3 Cato writes as follows: *In vineo vetero ocinum, si macra erit (quod granum ne serito)*. . . . Professor Brehaut translates this as follows: "If an old vineyard is poor, sow *ocinum* (but do not allow it to go to seed). . . ." I should say that Cato means that the farmer is not to sow anything that will bear a kernel or a grain. He is merely urging the farmer to sow something which has fertilizing value, something leguminous rather than a grain. According to Varro 1.31.4, *ocinum* bore *siliquae*. In 1777 a traveler observed husbandmen near Naples burying beans and lupines as a fertilizer even before they flowered¹³.

On page 89, note 5, Professor Brehaut comments as follows:

A puzzling feature of Cato's style, which appears especially in the cooking recipes, is the sudden appearance of the third person of the verb where the second person has been usual. . . .

I have read that the modern emphasis on consistency is largely a development subsequent to the invention of printing and that it was press readers who stressed the need for uniformity. Cato's cooking recipes would naturally be collected at different times. He simply failed to edit them carefully enough, but he would doubtless have been surprised if he could have heard his variations described as "a puzzling feature"¹⁴. In an interpolation in a work called *Medicina Plinii* the introductory directions for the use of an incantation of fewer than fifty words are in the second person, whereas the final directions are in the third person:

<Ad> syringium <sic!> curandum haec verba infrascripta *dicis, ascendis* in montem mundus purus ex omni re, *ter dicis* sic extensa manu palmam habens: "Sol invicte. . ."; dum haec *fecerit*, ex alia parte in domum suam *revertatur*, ita tamen ut retro se non *respiciat*¹⁵.

In his notes Professor Brehaut naturally and rightly concentrates upon agricultural customs and practices. So far as they have to do with religious matters, he is indebted chiefly to W. Warde Fowler, to whom he might have referred¹⁶ in connection with Cato's remarks

⁹Roman Essays and Interpretations, 82 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1920).

¹⁰The Courts of Europe at the Close of the Last Century, By the Late Henry Swinburne, Edited by Charles White, 1.144 (London, Henry Colburn, 1841).

¹¹Chaucer spells "certain" in at least two different ways. Polybius (37.4) does, however, feel it necessary to stop his narrative to explain his variation between 'Polybius' and the personal pronoun.

¹²I am quoting this passage from T. Ricardus Heim, *Incantamenta Magica Graeca Latina*, 560 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1892). Heim states that the *Medicina Plinii* is contained in an unedited codex, Number 751, of the ninth century, at St. Gall.

¹³See W. Warde Fowler, *The Pontifices and the Feriae: The Law of Rest-Days, in Roman Essays and Interpretations*, 79-90 (see note 12, above).

⁹See, for example, 1.6; 39.2. Compare Varro 1.53. Cato (2.7) recommends selling worn-out oxen and blemished cattle. Varro (1.12.2) advises selling at as high a price as possible a farm in an unhealthy situation.

¹⁰J. A. St. John, *The History of the Manners and Customs of Ancient Greece*, 272-273 (London, Richard Bentley, 1842).

¹¹Compare Varro 3.2.5-6.

upon rest days¹⁷. In his Introduction Professor Brehaut has a section called Farm Religion (xli-xlv). Cato's passages on this subject are conveniently grouped and discussed by Professor E. E. Burriss in a paper entitled *The Religious Life on a Roman Farm as Reflected in the De Agricultura of Marcus Porcius Cato*¹⁸.

Professor Brehaut states (xlv) that none of the five bits of ritual mentioned by Cato refers "to religious observances of vineyard or olive-orchard farming, the chief topics of Cato's book. . . ."

At the conclusion of his discussion of Cato's passages on religion Professor Brehaut makes an interesting suggestion (xlv):

Perhaps the truest light in which to regard Cato's farm religion is as an attempt to carry over the rustic religious practice of a native Latin cereal farmer to the newer large-scale vineyard and olive-orchard farm where slaves were the only permanent occupants and the owner was merely a periodic visitor.

Had conditions in Latium been too disturbed to permit olive culture on a large scale and hence to foster the growth of religious observances in connection with it?

About three years after grafting the young <olive> tree begins to bear fruit; but eight or nine years are required before it produces plentifully. Thus Olive trees require from fifteen to nineteen years before they begin to repay the work and expense that have been lavished on them. Such a slow return will not begin to tempt men except in an age of peace and complete security for property. The cultivation, when once established, may last through a state of war and uncertainty—if not too protracted or too barbarous in character—but it could not be introduced except in an age of peace and security. The Olive was the latest and highest gift of the Mother-Goddess to her people.

The Olive has therefore always been symbolical of an orderly, peaceful, settled social system. . . .¹⁹

In short, the Olive is a tree that is associated with a high order of thought and a high standard of conduct. It demands these; it fosters them; and it degenerates or ceases where the population loses them. In the beginning the collective experience and wisdom of a people living for generations in a state of comparative peace formulated the rules of cultivation, and impressed them as a religious duty on succeeding generations²⁰.

Such conditions had not obtained among the children of Mars. Doubtless the necessity of getting some immediate return from the land explains why, as Professor Brehaut has noted (xxvii), ". . . The presence of olive trees on the land to be sown to grain seems frequently to be taken for granted. . . ."

As Professor Brehaut suggests (xli), the observance of the numerous festivals must have caused great inconvenience on such a farm as Cato describes. The old Roman ideas about things which might and might not be done on such days seem remote and unreal to us²¹, but I believe that anyone who reads Mrs. Julia Peterkin's story *Green Thursday*²² will be able to visualize far more clearly the hardship entailed by cessation of work when farm duties were pressing.

In Mrs. Peterkin's story a negro named Killdee has a field of cotton that he is trying to keep free of grass with the aid of a worn-out horse and an old plow. The grass is shooting up. He cannot afford to allow it to get ahead of him for even one day.

All Killdee's life he had heard that to stir the earth on Green Thursday was a deadly sin. Fields plowed, or even hoed to-day would be struck by lightning and killed so that they couldn't bear life again. God would send fire down from heaven to punish men who didn't respect this day. Yet here he and Mike <his horse> were plowing. Risking the wrath of the great I-Am.

After a storm had come and his baby had been fatally burned, he reflected about his wrongdoing:

Something inside him made him shake and shiver as he sat trying to think things out. Something kept telling him he had plowed the ground on Green Thursday. He had stirred the earth on a holy day.

On the emergency fast days that were not infrequently proclaimed in the early history of New England work had to cease. The last sentence of "A Proclamation for a Fast" issued by a Governor of Connecticut in 1709 runs as follows²³: "And I do hereby strictly prohibit and forbid all Servile Labour upon the said day"²⁴.

Professor Brehaut says of the *Suovetaurilia* (120, note 1): "The procession around the fields drew a magic circle with protection for everything within it from malign supernatural influences. . . ." The origin of the ceremony has been explained as due to the necessity for marking off "cultivated land from the forest and its dangerous spiritual population, in some way by which the latter might be prevented from making itself unpleasant"²⁵.

Professor Brehaut did not have much space available for popular lore and superstitions. Since in Cato's time farming, like soldiering and statecraft and medicine and the sciences in general, was still hampered and fettered by the shackles of popular credulities, much attention will have to be paid to this subject by the scholar who undertakes to make a definitive annotated edition.

I have seen an occasional skull suspended from reeds in vineyards to protect the vines against bewitchment²⁶. The fear of such a calamity is well illustrated by an incident in the life of Gregorovius. He once sought the shade of an olive tree in a vineyard in order to read. His comfort was soon disturbed by an alarmed peasant woman who thought that he was trying to bewitch the vines by means of his parchment-covered book²⁷.

The supposed influence of the moon on vegetation is a subject worthy of more than a passing remark in any serious work on the history of agriculture. In his book *The Old Farmer and His Almanack* Professor Kittredge has a chapter which he calls *Have an Eye to the Moon*²⁸! In several places Cato speaks of performing agricul-

¹⁷W. DeLoss Love, *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1895).

¹⁸A facsimile of this proclamation faces page 432 of the volume cited in the preceding note.

¹⁹W. Warde Fowler, *Lustratio*, a chapter in *Anthropology and the Classics*, 176-177 (Edited by R. R. Marett [Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1908]).

²⁰They were found about estates in antiquity also.

²¹Gregorovius, 76-77 (see note 8, above).

²²George Lyman Kittredge, *The Old Farmer and His Almanack, Being Some Observations on Life and Manners in New England a Hundred Years Ago Suggested by Reading the Earlier Numbers of Mr. Robert B. Thomas's Farmer's Almanack . . .*, 305-314 (Harvard University Press, 1924).

¹⁷2.4. ¹⁸THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 21.27-30.

¹⁹W. M. Ramsay, *Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christian History*, 232-233 (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1906).

²⁰*Ibidem*, 236.

²¹See the essay by Fowler cited in note 16, above.

²²Chapter II, 26-49, in a volume of the same name, *Green Thursday, Stories by Julia Peterkin* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1929). My first quotation from it occurs on pages 28-29, the second on page 47.

tural operations according to the phases of the moon²⁹, a topic on which much material has been collected from agricultural writers and others³⁰. Perhaps no one else has summarized Roman views on this subject so well as Palladius (1.34.8): Quaecumque serenda sunt cum luna crescit seminantur, quae secunda sunt vel legenda, cum minuitur. It was said that Egyptian priests refrained from eating onions because of their perversity in sprouting during the waning of the moon and in drying during its waxing³¹. Cato (31.2) holds that trees should be dug up when the moon is on the wane. In winter one should not touch timber except in the dark of the moon or in the last quarter (37.3)³².

We ourselves have much similar lore of the moon. The following quotation is fairly representative³³:

... In general, it is said that vegetables which are desired to grow chiefly underground, such as potatoes, onions, beets, turnips, radishes and peanuts, are best planted in the dark of the moon. Plants which bear the edible part above ground, such as corn, beans, tomatoes and peas, are best planted in the light of the moon....

The number three plays a prominent rôle in folklore, but perhaps it is most conspicuous in popular remedies³⁴. Cato (70.1) gives the following prescription to avert illness of work oxen³⁵:

If you are afraid of sickness, give them while they are still in good health three grains of salt, three leaves of bay, three shreds of cut leek, three spikes of bulbed leek, three spikes of garlic, three grains of incense, three plants of the Sabine herb, three leaves of rue, three tendrils of the white vine, three small white beans, three live coals, three *sextarii* of wine.

In this prescription the number three occurs twelve times. This repetition may be described as pluralizing magic.

Cato (160) has a famous prescription for the treatment of a dislocated joint³⁶. Professor Brehaut's translation is as follows:

If any joint is dislocated it will be made well by this incantation. Take a green reed four or five feet long, split it in half and let two men hold the halves at their hips. Begin to sing a charm: *molas vaeta daries dardares astataries dissunapiter*, until the halves come together. Keep brandishing a sword over them. When they have come together and one half-reed touches the other, seize them in the hand and cut them off to right and left, bind them on the dislocation or fracture and it will be cured. However, go through the form of incantation daily over the man who has suffered the dislocation. Or use this form: *huat huat istasis tarsis ardannabou dannastra*.

I do not see why the two men are to hold the halves

²⁹20; 31.2; 37.3-4; 40.1; 50.1. See Professor Brehaut's Index under the word Moon.

³⁰Eugene Tavenner, *The Roman Farmer and the Moon*, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association 49 (1918), 67-82. An excellent ancient passage on this subject is Varro 1.37.1-3.

³¹Aulus Gellius 20.7.

³²For other directions in regard to cutting timber see 17.1-2; 37.4; 151.2. In my forthcoming article referred to in note 1a, above, I shall give a number of references to passages advocating the cutting of timber according to the phases of the moon.

³³Vance Randolph, *The Ozarks: An American Survival of Primitive Society*, 118 (New York, The Vanguard Press, 1931).

³⁴I have collected many references in Pliny to three in folk medicine. See *Folklore of Number in Pliny's Natural History*, *Philological Quarterly* 2 (1923), 29, note 10. On page 28, note 7, of that article I have given three references to papers on magical and superstitious uses of the number three.

³⁵The translation is Professor Brehaut's.

³⁶See T. Ricardus Heim, 533-535, 565-566 (see note 15, above).

at their own hips rather than at the patient's <the Latin says, duo homines teneant ad coxendices. . . . C. K.>, nor do I understand how the halves of the reed could come together under such circumstances. It is when the halves are united after being applied to the dislocation that they are to be bound.

There is a large body of folk medicine that may rightly be associated with Cato's splint treatment. Both in ancient and in modern Italy, as well as elsewhere, sick children and adults have been passed through split saplings in the belief that they will be cured as the saplings grow together³⁷. This is sympathetic magic^{37a}. An excellent example is to be found in Marcellus, *De Medicamentis* 33.26:

Si puero tenero ramex descenderit, cerasum novellam radicibus suis stantem medium findito, ita ut per plagam puer traici possit, ac rursus arbusculam coniunge et fimo bubulo alisque fomentis obline, quo facilius in se quae scissa sunt coeant. Quanto autem celerius arbuscula coaluerit et cicatricem duxerit, tanto citius ramex pueri sanabitur.

This seems to be the same principle as that employed in Cato's prescription, except that the split reeds have no natural tendency to come together, and, therefore, an incantation is substituted for nature.

Part of Cato's formula reads: *Ferrum insuper iactato*. Professor Brehaut (143) says of this sentence: "The use of iron may be a part of the magic". In my opinion, the iron plays no special rôle in this bit of magic. I believe that the purpose of this act is to put the dislocation on its good behavior, to frighten it into compliance. The ancients menaced hail clouds with bloody axes to make them go away³⁸. In Mexico fruit trees which have borne a poor crop have been whipped in order to force them to do better the next season.

In the lore of many peoples various stages of the growth and the development of fruits and vegetation and the arrival and departure of birds are monitors of seasonal activities upon the farm. Such phenological signs bring one very close to the soil. For years I have wondered why annotated editions of the Classics pay so scanty attention to this sort of chore calendar³⁹. There are four examples in Cato.

³⁷See, for instance, Sir James G. Fraser, *Balder the Beautiful*, 2.168-177 (London, Macmillan, 1914); T. F. Thistleton Dyer, *English Folk-Lore*, 23-25 (London, David Bogue, 1880).

^{37a}In October last, a friend in New York, learning that I was in a hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, was kind enough to send me a copy of a book the reading of which, he hoped, might help me to while away a few hours. The book, which I found very interesting, is a small volume by Mr. Cecil Torr, the English classical scholar. It is entitled *Small Talk at Weyland* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1932, "Miscellany Edition, further abridged"). In the early pages of this work there are various passages that will delight (perhaps have already delighted) Dr. McCartney. One passage runs as follows (15-16):

"A child was born here on 20 November 1902, and had a rupture. Some while afterwards I asked the father how the child was getting on, and the answer was, 'Oh, it be a sight better since us put 'n through a tree.' And I found that they had carried out the ancient rite. The father had split an ash tree on the hill behind this house, and had wedged the hole open with two chunks of oak. Then he and his wife took the child up there at daybreak; and, as the sun rose, they passed it three times through the tree, from east to west. The mother then took the child home, and the father pulled out the chunks of oak, and bandaged up the tree. As the tree trunk healed, so would the rupture heal also."

I asked him why he did it, and he seemed surprised at the question, and said, 'Why, all folk do it.' I then asked him whether he thought it really did much good, and the reply was, 'Well, as much good as sloppin' water over 'n in church' ". C. K.>.

³⁸Palladius 1.35.1.

³⁹I have listed a number of such signs in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 17.107. I shall give others in the article referred to in note 1a, above.

Slaves working in chains got five pounds of bread as their allowance from the time they began to dig the vineyard until they were reduced to four when figs began to ripen (56)⁴⁰. The blossoming of pears was the signal to offer sacrifice for the work oxen and to begin spring plowing (131). At this time, too, the man who had bought winter pasture was to relinquish it (149)⁴¹. When barley began to turn yellow, Tarentine cypress might be cut (151.2).

Varro tells us (2.11.7) that sheep with coarse wool were clipped at about the time of the barley harvest, although there were places in which this task was performed at haying time. According to Vergil (*Georgics* 2.319-320), the best spring season for planting vines was indicated by the return of the stork.

In our own lore the proper time for planting corn is when the white-oak leaves are the size of a squirrel's ear, a sign which we have taken from the Indians.

An almost equally interesting method of timing the performance of farm chores is by the number of days before or after the solstices and the equinoxes. It was certainly easier to use and more dependable than the formal calendar, which was frequently in need of some correction.

Cato recommended that pears and apples be grafted within a period of fifty days at the time of the summer solstice (41.1). Oak wood and wood for vine props were to be cut at the time of the winter solstice (17.1). The pruning of the olive orchard was to begin fifteen days before the spring equinox (44). Asparagus seeds should be sown after the spring equinox (161.1).

Superstition frequently plays a part in this type of chore calendar. Varro (1.34.1), for instance, says that seeds planted before the winter solstice germinate in seven days, whereas those sown after it hardly sprout in forty.

Certain ancient methods of measuring spaces and objects now seem to us to be somewhat quaint. Units of measurement in Cato are the finger tips⁴², the little finger⁴³, the fingers in general⁴⁴, the thumb⁴⁵, the palm⁴⁶, and the thickness of a man's arm⁴⁷. One measurement is three and one-half fingers⁴⁸. The olive mill that is next to the largest is four feet, one palm across, and one foot, one finger "between the central upright and the brim"; the brim is five fingers wide. The circular stones are three feet, five fingers high, one foot, three fingers thick⁴⁹.

The use of parts of the body as units of measurement⁵⁰ is not always thoroughly understood. I notice that in the excellent translation of Cato in *The Loeb Classical Library* the sentence *Vineam veterem si in alium transferre voles, dumtaxat brachium crassam licebit* (49.1) is rendered as follows: "You may transplant an old vine if you wish, provided the branches are strong". Cato was not using figurative language. Strabo

(11.10.2⁵¹) tells of grapevine stocks so large that it required two men to girth them. Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 16.203, speaks of a tree *crassitudinis . . . ad trium hominum complexum*⁵².

So far as I am aware, there is no exhaustive treatment of the subject of fallow land among the ancients. It is worthy of a thorough investigation. After telling how Constantinople was supplied with wheat from Egypt in the days of Justinian Gibbon makes a striking remark⁵³:

... The annual powers of vegetation, instead of being exhausted by two thousand harvests, were renewed and invigorated by skilful husbandry, rich manure, and seasonable repose. . . .

The Romans had some way of telling—was it by experience only?—that certain land would not grow barley or wheat every year (see Cato 35.2). Varro (3.16.33) says that those who allow the ground to lie fallow reap more ground because of the respite.

Do we know more about such things than the Romans did? It was by the merest chance that the discovery was made in Northwestern Canada in 1886 that land which had lain fallow one year would produce an abundant wheat harvest the following summer, while the yield on a neighboring field which had borne a good crop the year before would not warrant pulling binders out of sheds⁵⁴.

An interesting statement in regard to allowing land to lie fallow is made by an explorer who has recently traveled in Tibet⁵⁵: "... The natives crop a field two years and leave it fallow one if there is no manure to put on the field. . . ."

Professor Brehaut lists in his selected bibliography a thorough work by A. G. Drachmann, *Ancient Oil Mills and Presses*, which appeared too late for him to use. It is reviewed by Professor Gordon J. Laing in *Classical Philology* 29 (1934), 363-364.

Since the publication of Professor Brehaut's translation there has appeared an article which is worth mentioning in connection with the chapters on grafting (40-42). It is by Professor A. S. Pease, *Notes on Ancient Grafting*, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 64 (1933), 66-76. The summary at the head of this paper reads:

The more serious ancient instances of grafting between plants of different families were presumably the products, not of scions, but of "grafting by approach"⁵⁶.

On page 4, note 9 Professor Brehaut summarizes Cato's passages on the feeding of foliage of various kinds to cattle⁵⁷. Recent issues of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*

⁴⁰Compare 17.3.4.

⁴¹Compare Washington Irving, *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Volume II, Book XIV, Chapter II: "... a magnificent tree of such enormous magnitude that seventeen men with their hands could not embrace the trunk".

⁴²Edward Gibbon, *A History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edited by J. B. Bury, 227 (London, Methuen and Company, 1900). One may quickly find the quotation in other editions by consulting Chapter 40, Section 3.

⁴³Paul de Kruif, *Hunger Fighters*, 39-40 (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928).

⁴⁴W. N. Koels, *The Roof of the World: From the Diary of a Traveler in Tibet*, *Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review* 41 (1935), 284.

⁴⁵A definition of the term is quoted by Professor Brehaut on page 68, note 4.

⁴⁶The various references are 5.8; 6.3; 11.4; 30; 54.2, 4; 139. In Chapter 30 Cato exhorts the farmer to remember that the winter is long and that he should be as saving of dry fodder as possible.

⁴⁷Compare Horace, *Epistulae* 1.7.5-6 *Maecenas, veniam dum ficus prima calorque dissignatorem decorat lictoribus atris*. . . .

⁴⁸Compare Varro 1.37.5.

⁴⁹21.2. ⁵⁰22.1.

⁵¹18.1, 7, 9; 21.4; 22.1, 4; 28.2; 40.4; 42; 45.3; 46.2; 135.4, 6, 7.

⁵²19.2; 20.2. ⁵³43.1; 135.6. ⁵⁴49.1. ⁵⁵42. ⁵⁶135.6.

⁵⁷I have given numerous examples of such measurements in an article called *Popular Methods of Measuring*, *The Classical Journal* 22 (1927), 325-344.

contain two interesting notes on this practice in modern times. They are by Professor Mary Johnston, *Elm Leaves for Fodder*, 28 (1934), 23, and Professor Harrison Boyd Ash, *Supplementary Fodder for Cattle*, 28 (1935), 103-104.

Miss Natalie Hunter, *On Buying a Farm*, *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 28 (1934), 31, provides an American parallel to Cato 1.1-4.

Cato (25; 54.1) tells the farmer to preserve in storage jars the refuse of the wine press, so that it may be fed to oxen in winter. We ourselves feed cottonseed hulls to cattle. The following extract is from an article by a Texas cattleman⁴²:

In our country there is no hay; we pull through the droughts on cottonseed cake, fed to our cattle upon the ground. It is very nutritious, and a few pounds a day will keep an old cow alive on a rock pile. We have paid as high as fifty dollars a ton for cake, but that was when calves commanded a good price too.

For a readable appreciation of ancient agriculture I recommend David Buffum, *The Farmer's Pedigree*, *The Atlantic Monthly* 108 (1911), 376-385. As for myself, there is nothing else in Cato which cuts down the barriers of time and space so effectually as his statement that good neighbors helped to erect buildings (4). Our barnraisings and husking bees are similar expressions of neighborliness.

Anyone who undertakes to make an entirely independent translation of Cato will soon become involved in difficulties. The finding of precise English words for the names of parts of implements is itself no mean feat. Professor Brehaut's translation is very good, and his notes are illuminating and adequate for his purposes.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

EUGENE S. MCCARTNEY

ADDITIONS TO A LIST OF CLASSICAL ECHOES IN THE POETRY OF A. E. HOUSMAN

Mr. John Sparrow, writing on *Echoes in the Poetry of A. E. Housman*, cites several parallels of that poetry with the Classics¹. He says (247), "Direct evidences of classical reading are few". I believe he has missed at least three unmistakable instances in which Mr. Housman had a classical passage in mind.

These occur in that strange, beautiful, though rather incoherent poem, *The Oracles*, Number XXV in *Last Poems*². The last stanza runs thus:

The King with half the East at heel is marched
from lands of morning;
Their fighters drink the rivers up, their shafts
benight the air.
And he that stands will die for nought, and home
there's no returning.
The Spartans On The Sea-Wet Rock Sat Down And
Combed Their Hair.

This is drawn almost entirely from Herodotus. With the first verse of the stanza and the first half of the next verse compare Herodotus 7.108, where the historian relates the fact that the army of Xerxes drank up the

river Lissus. "Their shafts benight the air. . ." recalls Herodotus 7.226. . . *ὡς ἐπεὰν οἱ βάρβαροι ἀπιδῶσι τὰ τοξεύματα, τὸν ἥλιον ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν ὀιστῶν ἀποκρύπτουσι· τοσοῦτο πλήθος αὐτῶν εἶναι*. The last verse echoes Herodotus 7.208-209, where a spy sent by Xerxes finds some of the Spartans at Thermopylae exercising, others combing their hair³, as was their custom before battle.

WABASH COLLEGE,
CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA

LEVI ROBERT LIND

CLASSICAL ARTICLES IN NON-CLASSICAL PERIODICALS

VI

Beiblatt Zur Anglia—December, 1934, Review, favorable, by Walter F. Shirmer, of Henry Burrowes Lathrop, *Translations from the Classics into English from Caxton to Chapman, 1475-1620*; January-February, 1935, Review, uncritical, by W. Fischer, of *The Axiochus of Plato*, Translated by Edmund Spenser, Edited by F. M. Padelford.

Bibliotheca Sacra—April-May-June, Locating and Excavating Ancient Palestinian Cities, James L. Kelso [this is an outline of the procedure used by archaeologists].

Books—May 12, Review, unfavorable, by Max Radin, of F. A. Wright, *Alexander the Great*; May 19, Review, favorable, by George M. Whicher, of Josephus: *Jewish Antiquities*, Volume V, Books V-VIII, Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus, of *Select Papyri: Volume II, Official Documents*, Translated by A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar, of *Diodorus Siculus: Volume I, Books I-II, 1-34*, Translated by C. H. Oldfather, and of *Arrian: Volume II, History of Alexander* [the title-page gives *Anabasis Alexandri*], Books V-VII, *Indica*, Book VIII, Translated by E. Iliff Robson [the four volumes reviewed by Mr. Whicher all belong to The Loeb Classical Library]; June 23, Review, very unfavorable, by Daniel S. Rankin, of Theodor Haecker, *Virgil, Father of the West*; July 14, Review, favorable, by Max Radin, of *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume X: The Augustan Empire, 44 B. C.-A. D. 70*, Edited by S. A. Cook, F. E. Adcock, and M. P. Charlesworth; July 28, Review, unfavorable, by Max Radin, of *Sulamith Ish-Kishor, Magnificent Hadrian*; September 1, *Horace Remembered*, May Lamberton Becker [this note mentions and annotates a group of books dealing with Horace].

Bulletin of The John Rylands Library—July, *The New Testament Papyri*, unsigned [this is a note on the Chester Beatty Papyri]; *An Unknown Gospel*, unsigned [this note deals with "... a New Testament papyrus fragment of the early part of the second century". It was published in *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel*, and other Early Christian Papyri, Edited by H. Idris Bell and T. C. Skeat]; *The Background of the Fourth Gospel*, C. H. Dodd.

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY,
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

ADOLPH F. PAULI

<Since this tale was so familiar, Mr. Housman, in referring to it here, may not in this case have been thinking of Herodotus at all. C. K.>

⁴²J. Evetts Haley, *The Saturday Evening Post* 207.28 (December 8, 1934).

¹John Hanbury Angus Sparrow, *Echoes in the Poetry of A. E. Housman*, in *The Nineteenth Century and After* 115.243-256 (February, 1934).

²New York, Henry Holt (1922).